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Director of Central Intelligence

~~Top Secret~~

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El SALVADOR: Maneuvering in the Military

Defense Minister Garcia has moved loyalists in the military to key posts to shore up his faltering support, but his actions are likely to precipitate renewed efforts to unseat him. (b)(3)

Chief of (b)(1)
Staff Flores Lima will serve as sub - Minister of Defense, (b)(3)
a position that has been vacant since the guerrillas captured his predecessor last June. 2nd Brigade leader Colonel Reyes, who is viewed by dissidents in the armed forces as one of Garcia's supporters, will replace Flores Lima. other changes include the (b)(1)
possible reassignment overseas of at least one dissident (b)(3)
junior officer and the removal of a weak field commander
considered loyal to the Defense Minister. (b)(3)

The five insurgent factions, meanwhile, are increasing their efforts to coordinate attacks on civilian and military targets around the country. One major goal reportedly is to gain control over more territory east of the Lempa River. (b)(1)
(b)(3)

Comment: Garcia probably will resign if a majority of officers and President Magana ask him to do so, but he apparently wants to retain his post at least for the short term. Flores Lima now will be more directly under his control, (b)(1)
Garcia's removal of a loyal (b)(3)
but weak commander appears intended to offset frequent charges of cronyism. (b)(3)

Nevertheless, Garcia's opponents--including Air Force Commander Bustillo and 1st Brigade leader Colonel Blandon--could see Garcia's tactics as a signal that he plans to renege on his promise to step down soon. If so, this probably will result in renewed coup plotting against Garcia and other senior officers loyal to him. (b)(3)

Garcia's presumed successor, General Vides Casanova,
He could be among the political casualties if Garcia's opponents win control. (b)(3)

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